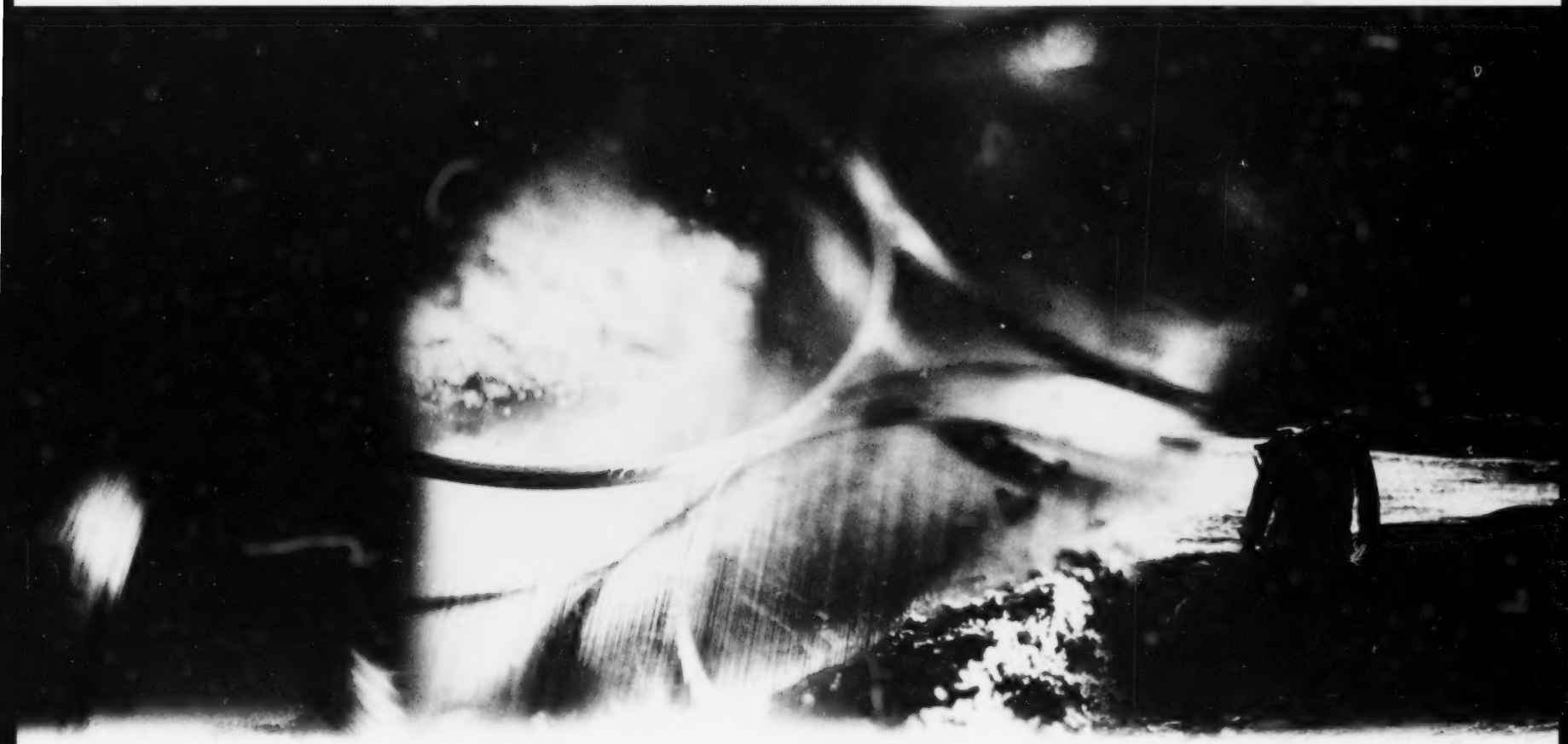
ANNUAL REPORT 2002.03

Making Inroads



NOVA SCOTIA
Health
Research
FOUNDATION

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Message from the Chair

There is no doubt that health research is the cornerstone of progress. It is the foundation upon which we build efficient health care systems, develop comprehensive health care policies and discover more effective medical treatments. But research does not happen randomly. It is not an ad hoc activity. It requires planning and partnership. It requires collaboration and creativity.

I'm proud to say that the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation is an active partner in the province's growing health research community. We came into being specifically because of concerns voiced by researchers, government representatives, educators and community groups that Nova Scotia needed to be able to compete nationally for research dollars and to build a strong support system for decision-making in this area.

We are well on our way. Indeed, there is no doubt that the quality and the scope of the health research being conducted in Nova Scotia is among the best in the country, indeed, the world.

To ensure the continued success of Nova Scotia researchers on the national and international stage, the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation has implemented a diverse array of programs and initiatives, as you will read in this report.

Those initiatives are founded on policies that support the Foundation and will do so for years to come. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the members of the Board of Directors who worked diligently to develop those policies and now oversee their implementation.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the staff of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, a small but highly effective team whose primary goal remains building a vibrant health research community right here at home.

Hugh A. Gillis
Chair

Message from the Executive Director

2002 was a year of continued growth and development for the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation. In only a few years, NSHRF has become an integral part of the Nova Scotia health research community. That was our primary goal. That will remain our primary goal.

Our mandate is, quite simply, to assist, collaborate with, and fund research in Nova Scotia. We are doing that. This year we received 149 applications in our annual provincial competition for researchers and students – a 26% increase since our first competition in 2000.

The quality of those applications is noteworthy. Indeed, we couldn't fund everyone who qualified. In total, 53 researchers or research teams and students were funded. Disciplines represented among the successful applicants include basic science, medicine, psychology, nutrition, occupational health, and human resources. In this annual report, we are celebrating nursing research, an important component of the four areas of research we fund: biomedical, health policy, health services and health outcome research.

The health care system is under scrutiny. We are hearing about current – and future – shortages of health care providers, problems with access to care, and issues surrounding community involvement in health care planning and fund allocation – to name just a few. The nursing community in Nova Scotia has responded to the need for better and more relevant information upon which smart health decisions can be made.

We are pleased to say that in fiscal 2002 the Foundation has committed over $700,000 in nursing research through our programs. This is truly a wonderful sign of a vibrant and exciting nursing research community situated right here in Nova Scotia.

Our job at the Foundation goes beyond providing funding. We want to help build a nationally well-funded research community and build awareness of the tremendous expertise that exists right here, right now.

A vibrant research community requires ongoing support. We will be here to help. Over the next two to three years, the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation will contribute more than $4.5 million to support new research.

We have made substantial inroads. But there is much more to achieve. We will continue to meet with our colleagues throughout the Atlantic region to examine how we can collectively strengthen our research base and increase the level of funds coming into the region. We will continue to provide workshops for our researchers to further develop their skills so that they can compete even more successfully in the national and international arenas. We will continue to identify more ways to support our students so that they can pursue a research career right here in Nova Scotia.

Through these efforts – and others – we expect not only to support our current research community, but to help attract other researchers to join with us. That is one of the major benefits of a successful health research community.

Healthier Nova Scotians and a healthier economy are two others.

Krista Connell

Krista Connell
Executive Director

Highlights of the Fiscal Year

Fiscal 2002 was a busy and productive year. Here's some of what we accomplished:

- We received 149 applications for project grants and student awards, a 10% increase over last year's competition and a 26% increase since our first competition in 2000. We were able to award funding to more than 53 researchers and graduate students.

- A highlight this year was Research into Nursing/Nursing into Research; the Foundation awarded more than $700,000 to nursing-related projects across the province.

- In anticipation of a banner year, we made a number of improvements to the grant programs based on feedback from researchers. Changes included establishing larger peer-review committees and allowing supervisors more students.

- On May 30, 2002, we hosted a one-day workshop attended by 30 people with an interest in cognitive impairment. Participants, including Dr. Rejean Hebert, Scientific Director for the CIHR Institute on Aging, explored ways to mobilize research activity in this area that could qualify for CIHR funds. In particular, they looked for ways to facilitate understanding of the CIHR's Institute on Aging's new strategy on cognitive impairment, to consider how researchers might seize opportunities and manage the inherent challenges associated with the strategy, and to investigate collaborative possibilities.

- The annual workshop series kicked off in September with a two-day grant-writing workshop attended by researchers and students as well as representatives from across the Atlantic region including the Newfoundland Centre for Applied Health Research, the PEI Health Research Institute, and the New Brunswick Medical Research Fund, and national funding agencies including SSHRC, CIHR and CHSRF. Following this event, the provincial research agencies in the Atlantic Region held an informal meeting.

Strategic Planning: Process and Progress

Since our inception, we have undertaken significant research and consultation to develop and refine our strategic focus and action plan. This has involved commissioning studies to identify key issues and objectives and establishing a baseline measure against which progress toward achieving those objectives could be measured.

Those studies included an overview of the current status of health research in Nova Scotia, which was distributed for comment through the website and directly to 83 individuals and organizations from the local research community, national funding agencies, and provincial government departments, and a survey of public perceptions of health research in Nova Scotia involving more than 400 residents in Nova Scotia.

In 2002, NSHRF commissioned an environmental scan and situational analysis to obtain stakeholder input with respect to key issues and strategic priorities.

The study included:

- A literature review on establishing health research priorities.
- Key informant interviews with 18 individuals in planning and decision-making roles in the provincial government, the university system, the health care delivery system, research institutes and groups, and community-based health organizations.
- Four regional workshops involving some 60 individuals representing a broad cross-section of interests including health researchers, academics, provincial government planners and decision-makers, frontline health care providers, members of regional and district health boards, and community-based health activists.

This culminated in the release of the three-year strategic action plan.

- In February, we released our first issue of our newsletter *Research Advances* devoted to sharing the successes of our health research community. The goal of the newsletter is to highlight health research in Nova Scotia and provide information on results from research projects. Ten researchers were profiled in the inaugural issue including Thomas MacRae, who is exploring brine shrimp as a mechanism to understanding more about cataracts; Vett Lloyd, who is using fruit flies to cut research costs and find a cure for a rare genetic disease; and Robert Brownstone, who is exploring how the body's central nervous system does the locomotion.

- The Capacity Building Program was enormously successful this year – more than $277,000 was distributed to support research initiatives. There was such an overwhelming interest and so many high-quality applications that, unfortunately, the number of applications exceeded resource availability. As a result, program guidelines were reviewed and modified to enable support of more researchers in future years.

- In October, NSHRF was the proud sponsor of the fall issue of Health Promotion Atlantic, a regional newsletter produced by the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre and the Community Health Promotion Network Atlantic. The focus was on research results and moving forward. To read the issue, drop by www.medicine.dal.ca/ahprc/publications.html.

- We were also delighted to be a partner with the Dalhousie Medical School and Capital Health in producing a newsletter distributed to Nova Scotians in The Chronicle-Herald. The newsletter, part of the annual Research Week celebration, focused on innovative research funded by NSHRF and currently under way in the province.

- This is the third year that NSHRF has been a proud sponsor of MegaSearch™, a curriculum supplement that includes an educational comic book of the same name and related activities promoting interest in health, medical science and local research. MegaSearch™ was developed by Dalhousie Medical School for grade five students throughout the province. Part of the program includes the opportunity for students to enter a research competition. This year three grade five students from St. Margaret's Bay Elementary School, Kaitland Colby, Samantha Law and Stephanie Blois-Snair, won the provincial event with their project on epilepsy. Their prize included a tour of Dalhousie Medical School's research facilities, and introductions to some of the medical school's researchers and graduate students as well as to NSHRF. The winning trio arrived to collect their winnings with all 21 of their classmates and their teacher.

MegaSearch™ Competition winner Stephanie Blois-Snair, Kaitland Colby, and Samantha Law of Ms. Debby Cross's grade five class from St. Margaret's Bay Elementary School with NSHRF Executive Director Krista Connell.

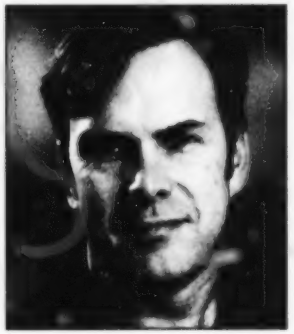
- We reviewed our website – www.nshrf.ca – to ensure that it was continuing to meet the needs of users. The site continues to attract new users and that use has, in fact, roughly doubled since we examined usage patterns last fiscal year. An examination of usage between June and December 2002 showed a particular jump in July – to nearly twice the average monthly figures – when grant recipients were announced. The website continues to function as a popular way for applicants to get application forms, as well as a quick way to view copies of our annual report and other publications.

- We celebrated the success of researchers like Wanda Thomas Bernard, Director of the Maritime School of Social Work, who received a capacity building grant from NSHRF to develop a proposal examining the effects of individual and systemic violence on African Nova Scotians. Her proposal was subsequently awarded a $240,000 grant from the CIHR Institute of Gender and Health.

Profiles

Project Grants

Here are a few of the project grants funded in fiscal 2002:



Prevalence and Prevention of Depression in At-Risk First-Year University Students

Peter McLeod

Department of Psychology, Acadia University

This three-year research project involves researchers from Dalhousie University, Acadia University and the Colchester East Hants Health Authority and has two goals: to determine the extend of depression among first-year students at Acadia and to test a promising prevention program for students at risk of a major depressive disorder, which frequently occurs for the first time in adolescence or young adulthood. Prevention of depression could reduce suffering and enhance well-being for many at-risk individuals.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease Comprehensive Care Program for Children and Families

Anthony Otley

Division of Gastroenterology/ Department of Pediatrics, IWK Health Centre

The number of children in Nova Scotia diagnosed with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, inflammatory bowel diseases, is increasing. This research project involves developing a comprehensive care program for older children and adolescents and their parents. A multi-purpose internet-based program will help with disease and pain self-management, give up-to-date and complete disease information, and provide a forum to talk with peers who have similar problems.

Understanding How Drugs Used to Treat Bipolar Disorder Work

Mark Nachtigal

Department of Pharmacology, Dalhousie University

Many Nova Scotians suffer from the disabling illness known as manic depressive disorder (bipolar disorder). This illness is characterized by extreme mood swings. Current treatment methods include many different types of drugs, one of which is valproic acid (VPA). While trying to determine how the drug carries out its specific effect on cells in the brain, the researchers recently made a novel discovery that VPA affects a pathway called the Stat pathway. The researchers will be exploring whether developing specific Stat-modulating drugs may be of therapeutic value for the treatment of Nova Scotians suffering with bipolar disorder.

Research into Nursing/Nursing into Research

Here are a few of the nursing-related projects funded in fiscal 2002:

Evaluation of an Early-Intervention Initiative with High-Risk Families Living in High-Needs Communities

Jean Hughes
School of Nursing, Dalhousie University

Parents who live under the stressors of poverty, social isolation or abuse face a great challenge that seriously weakens parenting interactions and jeopardizes child development. They also often lack the support necessary to engage in positive parenting practices. This study involves testing the effectiveness of a comprehensive early intervention program, called Growing Together, that was established in late 1999 to respond to the multiple needs of high-risk young families living in two diverse communities: North Dartmouth and Northside-Victoria Cape Breton. GT is designed to (1) promote healthy child development and prevent future problems in both parents and children; and (2) intervene early in situations where the development of an infant or child is at risk.

Jean Hughes

The Midlife Health and Well Being of African Nova Scotian Women

Barbara Keddy and **Josephine Etowa**
School of Nursing, Dalhousie University

Initiated by the Health Association of African Canadians, this research will investigate the experiences of health and well-being among midlife African Nova Scotian women, with particular attention to how they are affected by menopause and the "myth of the strong Black woman." Using an approach that recognizes that racism, poverty, and sexism have a significant impact on women's abilities to access and receive equitable and informed health care services, interviews, standardized assessment of health perceptions, community workshops, and focus groups will lead to the development of community-supported and culturally appropriate health education and promotion materials.

Josephine Etowa

Public Health Nurses' Contributions to Primary Health Care and the Health of Nova Scotians

Donna Meagher-Stewart and **Megan Aston**
School of Nursing, Dalhousie University

Public health nurses are frontline workers in public health services across the province, account for the largest number of public health practitioners, and work primarily with populations with low socio-economic status. Limited research is available describing their practice and their effectiveness, particularly with respect to the concepts of citizen participation and inter-sectoral collaborative practice. The purpose of this study is to examine the primary health care practice of public health nurses in ensuring that Nova Scotians receive the most appropriate care by the most appropriate providers in the most appropriate settings.

Donna Meagher-Stewart

Megan Aston

NOVA SCOTIA HEALTH RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Matching Grants

Here are a few of the matching grants supported in fiscal 2002:

An Examination of Relationships Among Nursing Service Utilization: An Estimate of Population Health and Overall Health Status in the Province of Ontario

Gail Tomblin Murphy

Faculty of Nursing, Dalhousie University and PhD Candidate, University of Toronto

This research project addresses the dynamic nature of the needs for nursing resources, specifically the challenges involved in providing and managing the human resources responsive to those needs. There are three studies included in this research. The first assesses changes in the levels and distribution of health over time and will provide decision-makers with an evidence to match nurse resources to the changing needs of the population. Project two will focus on understanding the way nursing human resources are constrained or enhanced. The final piece of research will assist in developing evidence-based strategies for retaining different target groups of nurses.

104-00479/

Student Research Awards

The Efficacy of Guided Imagery on Blood Pressure in Hypertensive Pregnant Women

Faith Wight Moffatt

Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Dalhousie University and PhD Student, University of Toronto

There are currently no known methods to prevent most high blood pressure in pregnancy, and many measures used outside of pregnancy to reduce chronic hypertension are not recommended in pregnancy. Care is generally limited to close monitoring of blood pressure and other indicators of maternal and fetal safety, and rest, and in some circumstances, includes medication. Evidence from previous research indicates that psychological relaxation therapies can reduce blood pressure for some people and can positively influence stress, anxiety and coping. Such approaches can be low-cost and simple to use. This research project will examine one such relaxation intervention for hypertensive pregnant women.

Capacity Building Grants

Here are a few of the capacity building grants funded in fiscal 2002:

Ion Regulatory Capacity in Spinal Cord Injured Muscle

Jonathon Fowles
School of Recreation Management and Kinesiology, Acadia University

This project, which will help to develop enzymatic and biochemical techniques, has two goals: to characterize changes in key enzymes responsible for ion balance and fatigue in muscle following spinal cord injury and to determine what extent passive cycling exercise influences this process. The results of this study will help in developing appropriate interventions to restore function after spinal cord injury, as well as explore basic physiological processes of how muscle adapts to loading and unloading.

Early Detection of Autism and Other Disorders of Development: Capacity Building in Regions throughout Nova Scotia

Susan E. Bryson, Isabel Smith, Christine Ellsworth
and **Sarah Shea**
Departments of Pediatrics and Psychology, IWK Health Centre and Dalhousie University

Evidence points to the importance of early identification and treatment of children with disorders of development: outcomes are improved when children are identified and treated early in life. The purpose of this project is to develop a province-wide plan for early detection of autism and other developmental disorders. Screening methods to be used will be determined by consulting with primary health care providers throughout Nova Scotia. We seek methods that are feasible, effective, and sustainable. This work lays the foundation for a province-wide study in which we will evaluate the effectiveness of early screening for autism and other disorders of development.

Student Research Awards

The Experiences of Black Nurses: Recruitment and Retention Within the Health Care System

Josephine Etowa
Faculty of Nursing, Dalhousie University and PhD Candidate, University of Calgary

With projected shortages of nurses and the unique health needs of the Black community, it becomes even more important that people of African descent be adequately represented in nursing. Researchers in nursing literature state that it is vital for nursing to recruit more people from diverse backgrounds to effectively address the unique needs of the diverse populations served. This research will be the first Nova Scotian study, and one of the first Canadian studies, to examine Black health at a health service delivery level with a particular focus on the experience of Black nurses within the health care system. The goal of the research is to identify strategies for improving the recruitment and retention of Black people into the nursing profession.

Project Grants

Bearne, Stephen	Proteomic Studies of Fusobacterium Species Involved in Periodontal Disease	Dalhousie University
Cleave, Patricia & Bourassa, Derrick	Efficacy Research with Downe Syndrome: Four Interventions Designed to Impact Reading Ability	Dalhousie University Acadia University
Cummings, Elizabeth & Daneman, Denis	A Randomized Placebo-controlled Trial of Pioglitazone to Improve Metabolic Control in Adolescents with Type 1 Diabetes	IWK Health Centre Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto
Hughes, Jean	Evaluation of an Early Intervention Initiative with High-Risk Families Living in High-Needs Communities	Dalhousie University
Jakeman, David	Enzyme Catalyzed Synthesis of Carbohydrate-containing Antibiotics	Dalhousie University
Jangaard, Krista	The Impact of Extreme Hyperbilirubinemia in a Population of Healthy Term and Near Term Infants Born between 1994 and 2000 in Nova Scotia, Canada	IWK Health Centre
Johnson, Shanthi	Synergistic Role of Nutrition and Functional Capacity on Falls Among Frail Elderly	Acadia University
Keddy, Barbara & Etowa, Josephine	Menopause and the Myth of the Strong Black Woman: The Health and Well being of Midlife African Nova Scotian women	Dalhousie University
Kisely, Stephen	Does the Length of Time to Reaching Specialists Psychiatric Care Effect the Outcome of Depression?	Dalhousie University/QEII
McLeod, Peter	Prevalence and Prevention of Depression in At-risk First-year University Students	Acadia University
Meagher-Stewart, Donna	Fostering Citizen Participation and Collaborative Practice: Tapping the Wisdom and Voices of Public Health Nurses in NS	Dalhousie University
Otley, Anthony	Inflammatory Bowel Disease Comprehensive Care Program for Children and Families	IWK Health Centre
Porter, Geoffrey	Access to Care in Surgically-Treated Malignancies: Measurement Strategies	QEII Health Sciences Centre

Rafuse, Victor	Enhanced Production of Dopaminergic Neurons using Neural Precursor Cells	Dalhousie University
Scott, Heather	Fetal Fibronectin Testing for Suspected Premature Labour: Impact on Hospital Admission Rates and Health Care Costs in Nova Scotia	IWK Health Centre
Sigurdson, Leif	Development of Triage Criteria for Women on a Breast Reduction Surgery Waiting List	Dalhousie University
Twohig, Peter	Hypertension in Persons with Diabetes: A Qualitative Inquiry	Dalhousie University
Yanchar, Natalie	Knowledge and Practice of Childhood Motor Vehicle Restraint Use in Nova Scotia	IWK Health Centre

Capacity Building Grants

Development Grants

Catano, V.M.	A Longitudinal Study to Establish the Validity and Reliability of the Assessment Instruments Used to Select for Programs in Dentistry	Saint Mary's University
Clairmont, Donald	Proposal to Examine the Feasibility of a Drug Treatment Court in Nova Scotia	Dalhousie University
Fowles, Jonathon R.	Ion Regulatory Capacity in Spinal Cord Injured Muscle	Acadia University
Kisely, Stephen	The Effect of Physical and Psychiatric Co-Morbidity on Psychosocial and Medical Outcome – A Pilot Study of Mortality in Psychiatric from Nova Scotia	QEII Health Sciences Centre
Sargeant, Joan	Working with Physicians to Link Persohnal Assessment Profiles and Continuing Professional Development	Dalhousie University

Community Research Alliance Grants

Bryson, Susan	Early Detection of Autism and Other Disorders of Development: Capacity Building in Regions througout Nova Scotia	IWK Health Centre
Price, Lisa	Adolescent Psychologically and Physically Abusive Behaviour in Dating Relationships: The Development of a Three Year Longitudinal Study	Acadia University
Horvath, Peter	The Antecedents of Depression in Women in Rural Communities: Research, Training, and Education Collaboration among Community Service Organizations	Acadia University

Student Research Awards

Al-Khalidi, Mustafa	Chemical/Virus Interactions in Acute Hepatic Encephalopathy: Relationships Between Xenobiotic Chemical Exposure, Glycogen Accumulation and Cell Injury in Cultured Hepatocytes	Dalhousie University	Masters
Baguma-Nibasheka, Mark	Characterisation of a Novel Tumor Suppressor Gene Implicated in Esophageal Adenocarcinoma	Dalhousie University	Post Doc
Birnie, Carolyn Jean	Something to Talk About: Effects of Relationship Communication on Women's Physical and Mental Health	Acadia University	Masters
Bishop, G. Scott	Ergonomics Evaluation, Re-design, and Testing of a Wheelchair for Paraplegics for Transportation and Workplace	Dalhousie University	Masters
Bruce, Beth	Poisoning Among Young Children in Nova Scotia	IWK Health Centre	PhD
Cooke, Charmaine	Health Services Utilization Patterns for Seniors in Nova Scotia Diagnosed with Cardiovascular Disease on Statin Medications	Dalhousie University	Masters
Deurveilher, Samuel	Role of Transforming Growth Factor-alpha in the Circadian Rhythm of Sleep	Dalhousie University	Post Doc
Dubray, Jolene	The Determinants of Driving under the Influence of Cannabis Among Adolescents in Atlantic Canada	Dalhousie University	Masters
Elgar, Frank Jason	Unravelling Temporal Relations Between Maternal Depression and Child Behavioural Problems	Dalhousie University	PhD
Etowa, Josephine	The Experiences of Black Nurses: Recruitment and Retention Within the Health Care System	University of Calgary	PhD
Flaman, Anathea Sarah	A Yeast System for Analysis of Sterol Trafficking Defects in Niemann-Pick C Disease	Dalhousie University	PhD
Goudy, Nicola Brennan	Development and Testing of a Classification Model for the Diagnosis of Myofascial Pain Syndrome	Dalhousie University	Masters
Hanniman, Elyisha	Characterization of FXR in the regulation of reverse cholesterol transport, hepatic cholesterol elimination and the pathology of atherosclerosis	Dalhousie University	Masters
Howe, Alicia	A Yeast Genetics System to Understand How Alterations in Lipid Metabolism Affect Cell Growth/Death Decisions	Dalhousie University	PhD

Howell, Michelle	Inner-City Youth's Perceptions of Health Risks in Spryfield, Nova Scotia	Dalhousie University	Masters
Imai, Janice	A New Animal Model for Defects in the Development of the Neural Tube	Dalhousie University	Masters
Johnson, Christine	Evaluating Capacity Building for Food Security: An Assessment of a Participatory Food Costing Project	Mount Saint Vincent University	Masters
Loppie, Charlotte	Grandmothers' Voices: Mi'kmaq Women and the Menopause	Dalhousie University	PhD
Maaten, Sarah	The Effect of Chronic Disease Risk Factors on Health Service Utilization in Nova Scotia	Dalhousie University	Masters
MacDonald, Colleen	What are the Factors that Act as Barriers to Adequate Nutrition for Community Dwelling Senior Women in Nova Scotia	Mount Saint Vincent University	Masters
MacDonald, William	Determining the Molecular Basis of Genomic Imprinting	Dalhousie University	PhD
MacMaster, Frank	Adenosine in the Human Brain in Vivo	Dalhousie University	PhD
Manning, Margaret	Three Accounts of Home Care Policy History: 1986-2001, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Alberta	Mount Saint Vincent University	Masters
McIvor, Kimberley Jane	Assessing Categorical Perception of Stop Consonants in Children with Developmental Dyslexia Using Event-Related Brain Potentials	Dalhousie University	Masters
Nowell, James	Classical Singing Techniques and Vocal Health History of Canadian Undergraduate Voice Majors	Dalhousie University	Masters
O'Donnell, Allyson	Structural and Functional Elucidation of Cdc68-a Protein Involved in the Regulation of Chromatin Conformation	Dalhousie University	PhD
Raoul, Jennifer	Investigation into the Molecular Mechanisms of Metabolite-1, a Potent Novel Metabolite of Pentoxifylline: Implications for Inflammatory Bowel Disease	Dalhousie University	PhD
Ruyak, Peggy	Treatment of Insomnia in Rural Nova Scotia	Dalhousie University	PhD
Saber, Andrea	Hypothalamic Pitituary Adrenal Axis Modulation of Kindling-Induced Emotionality	Dalhousie University	PhD
Smith, Mark	Evaluation of an Online Interactive Program Designed to Reduce the Frequency of Risky Sexual Behaviour in a Young Adult Nova Scotia Population	Acadia University	Masters

Sparkes, Sandra J.	The Influence of Experimental Context on Attention Task Performance in Children with and without ADHD	Dalhousie University	PhD
Sun, Yu	Functional Characteristics of a Small Heat Shock/alpha-Crystallin Protein: Mutational Analysis of Protein Structure and Chaperone Activity	Dalhousie University	PhD
Swaine, Jessica	Improving Pragmatic Skills in Children with Autism through the Use of Social Stories	Dalhousie University	Masters
Wang, Jing Tian	Using Neuroimaging Methods to Elucidate Mechanisms of Speech Processing and Reading in Healthy and Dyslexic Young Adults	Dalhousie University	PhD
Weppler, Amy Lynn	Lung Epithelial Cell-vascular Endothelial Cell Interactions in Neutrophil Recruitment During Lung Inflammation/Infection	Dalhousie University	Masters
White, Kelly Dawn	Matching Nurses' Interventions to Coping Styles in Children	Dalhousie University	Masters
Wight Moffatt, C. Faith	The Efficacy of Guided Imagery on Blood Pressure in Hypertensive Pregnant Women	University of Toronto	PhD
Wright, Kristi	An Examination of the Effects of Midazolam on Preoperative Anxiety: Which Children Benefit Most?	Dalhousie University	PhD

Acadia Excels

Congratulations to Acadia University whose research community was awarded more than $325,000 this fiscal year. Acadia University should be congratulated for supporting its faculty in the development of their research programs, which resulted in the success in the NSHRF competition.

Hats off to these researchers:

Students Research Awards

Carolyn Birnie
Something to Talk About: Effects of Relationship Communication on Women's Physical and Mental Health
Department of Psychology, (Supervisor, Dr. Diane Holmberg) (Master's student research award)

Capacity Building Grants

Peter Horvath
The Antecedents of Depression in Women in Rural Communities: Research, Training, and Education Collaboration Among Community Service Organizations
Department of Psychology, (Community Research Award, Capacity Building Program)

Lisa Price
Adolescent Psychologically and Physically Abusive Behaviour in Dating Relationships: The Development of a Three Year Longitudinal Study
Department of Psychology, (Community Research Award, Capacity Building Program)

Jonathon Fowles
Ion Regulatory Capacity in Spinal Cord Injured Muscle
School of Recreation Management and Kinesiology
(Development Grant, Capacity Building Program)

Project Grants

Peter McLeod
Prevalence and Prevention of Depression in At-risk First-year University Students
Department of Psychology, (Three-year Collaborative Health Research Program Grant)

Shanthi Johnson
Synergestic Role of Nutrition and Functional Capacity on Falls Amoung Frail Elderly.
School of Nutrition and Dietetics (Three-year Collaborative Health Research Program Grant)

Auditor's Report

To the Directors of Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation

We have audited the balance sheet of Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation as at March 31, 2003 and the statements of the Foundation's net assets and operating support and expenditures for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Foundation's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects the financial position of the Foundation as at March 31, 2003 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

The prior year figures were reported on by other accountants.

Hunter & Belgrave

Hunter & Belgrave Chartered Accountants
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
June 11, 2003

Statement of Operating Support and Expenditures

Year ended March 31, 2003

	2003	2002 (as restated)
Operating Support		
Grant revenue	$ 375,000	$ 750,000
Program sponsorships	30,000	33,500
Investment income	306,474	32,620
	711,474	816,120
Operating Expenses		
Capacity building program	277,521	328,380
Salaries and benefits	185,127	159,449
Communications, public awareness and research findings	99,576	92,784
Consultants	85,391	44,968
Workshops	71,239	87,630
Peer review of grant applications	48,390	34,536
Office supplies	24,244	37,675
Travel and meetings	17,249	18,955
Telephone, fax and website maintenance	14,644	7,255
Meals and networking	6,833	3,438
Depreciation	6,675	7,848
Professional development	3,731	5,022
Regional partnership program	91	630
	$ 840,711	$ 828,570
Excess of Expenditures over Support	(129,237)	(12,450)
Net assets unrestricted balance, beginning of year, as originally reported	21,129	504,517
Prior period adjustment (note 9)	375,000	375,000
Net assets unrestricted balance, beginning of year, as restated	396,129	879,517
Transfer to restricted fund	-	(465,035)
Net change in investment in capital assets	5,505	(5,904)
Net Assets Unrestricted, Balance, End of Year	$ 272,397	$ 396,128

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended March 31, 2003

	Invested in capital assets	Restricted	Unrestricted	2003 Total	2002 (as restated) Total
Balance, beginning of year, as originally reported	$ 33,681	$ 310,592	$ 21,129	$ 365,402	$ 388,995
Prior period adjustment (note 9)	-	2,502,261	375,000	2,877,261	2,500,000
Balance, beginning of year, as restated	33,681	2,812,853	396,129	3,242,663	2,888,995
Excess of expenditures over support	-	-	(129,237)	(129,237)	(12,450)
Support for grants	-	2,125,000	-	2,125,000	4,250,000
Issuance of grants	-	(4,325,376)	-	(4,325,376)	(4,068,734)
Interest on restricted funds	-	-	-	-	184,851
Net change in investment in capital assets					
depreciation	(6,675)	-	6,675	-	-
acquisition of capital assets	1,170	-	(1,170)	-	-
Balance, end of year	$ 28,176	$ 612,477	$ 272,397	$ 913,050	$ 3,242,662

Balance Sheet

As at March 31, 2003

	2003	2002 (as restated)
Assets		
Cash		
- administration	$ 34,631	$ -
- restricted	269,351	-
Accounts receivable		
- administration	25,375	404,152
- restricted	221,368	2,156,846
Investments (note 4)		
- administration	225,838	134,013
- restricted	3,611,503	2,759,124
Capital assets (note 5)	28,176	33,681
	$ 4,416,242	$ 5,487,816
Liabilities		
Bank indebtedness	$ -	$ 73,973
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		
- administration	13,449	68,064
- restricted	3,489,743	2,103,116
	3,503,192	2,245,153
Net Assets		
Net assets invested in capital assets	28,176	33,681
Net assets restricted	612,477	2,812,853
Net assets unrestricted	272,397	396,129
	$913,050	$ 3,242,663
	$ 4,416,242	$ 5,487,816

Approved on Behalf of the Board:

Hugh A. Gillis

Hugh A. Gillis

Krista Connell

Krista Connell

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2003

1. DESCRIPTION OF ENTITY

The Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, a not-for-profit organization established by the Health Research Foundation Act of the Province of Nova Scotia (Bill No. 22), was given Royal Assent on December 3, 1998 and became effective on January 1, 2000. As stated in the Act, the objects of the Foundation are to assist, collaborate with and fund individuals and organizations conducting health research in the Province including the fields of health policy, health promotion and health care and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, assist health-services research, health outcome research, health public policy research and medical research.

The accompanying financial statements include only the assets and operations of the Foundation.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and reflect the following policies:

Fund Accounting

The Foundation follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions.

The Unrestricted Fund is used to account for the primary operations of the Foundation, including costs related to administration, operations, and promotion of the public awareness of the Foundation. Government grants and other income recorded directly by this fund include only those available for unrestricted operating purposes.

The Restricted Fund is used to account for funds received that are designated for the issuance of research grants including grants for medical, health-outcome, health-services, and public policy research. At the time the research grants are approved, the grant amounts payable are recorded as a reduction of the fund equity.

Revenue Recognition

Contributions are recognized as revenue of the fund to which they relate in the year received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Financial Instruments

The Foundation's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, investments, bank indebtedness and accounts payable. Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the company is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments. The fair market value of these financial instruments approximate their carrying values unless otherwise noted.

Investments

Investments are valued at the lower of average cost and quoted market value if there is a permanent decline in value.

Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires the Foundation's management to make use of estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and related notes to the financial statements. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost, and are amortized using the declining balance method at the annual rate of 30% for computer equipment and 20% for furniture and fixtures. Amortization is calculated at one-half of the normal annual rate in the year of acquisition; no amortization is recorded in the year of disposal. Leasehold improvements are amortized by the straight-line method over ten years with a full year of amortization recorded in the year of acquisition.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING

The annual grant made to the Foundation, which is provided from funds appropriated by the Nova Scotia legislature, shall be distributed in accordance with the objects of the Foundation as follows:

a) 40% shall be spent on medical research
b) 15% shall be spent on health-outcome research
c) 15% shall be spent on health-services research
d) 15% shall be spent on health-public policy research
e) a maximum of 15% may be spent on the administration of the Foundation and 5% of the total amount spent on administration shall be spent on increasing the public knowledge and awareness of the Foundation.

If less than the total money allocated is spent in any of the categories, the remaining portion shall be reallocated to one of the remaining categories in a manner determined by the Board. During 2002 the board approved reallocating 85% of the remaining portion of unspent administrative funds to medical research.

4. INVESTMENTS

At year end the investments consisted of

105,368.329 (2002 - 154.94) units of Investors Canadian High Yield Money Market Fund with an average cost of $10.00 (2002 - $10.00) per unit. Cost - $1,053,683 (2002 -$1,549); market value - $1,053,683 (2002 - $1,549).

557,346.449 (2002 - 243,164.68) units of Investors Government Bond Fund with an average cost $4.99 (2002 - $4.74) per unit. Cost - $2,781,159 (2002 - $1,152,601); market value - $2,764,996 (2002 - $1,157,464).

Nil (2002 - 143,789.14) units of Investors Canadian High Yield Income Fund with an average cost of $nil (2002 - $8.51) per unit. Cost - $nil (2002 - $1,223,646); market value - $nil (2002 - $1,262,469).

Nil (2002 - 103,899.66) units of Investors Mortgage Fund with an average cost of $nil (2002 - $4.96) per unit. Cost - $nil

(2002 - $515,342); market value - $nil (2002 - $517,212).
Investments have not been written down to quoted market value because there has been not been a permanent impairment in value.

5. CAPITAL ASSETS

	2003			2002
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Computer equipment	$ 11,967	$ 6,476	$ 5,491	$ 6,424
Furniture and fixtures	23,427	9,536	13,891	17,364
Leasehold improvements	10,992	2,198	8,794	9,893
	$ 46,386	$ 18,210	$ 28,176	$ 33,681

6. RESTRICTED FUND

During the year the restricted fund received a support grant from the province of Nova Scotia, authorized and paid health research grants, and earned investment income on the funds invested. For the current year all investment income was allocated to the operating fund. Amounts have been distributed to each category as follows:

	Opening Fund Balance (as restated)	Support Grants	Authorized Grants	Investment Income	Ending Fund Balance
Medical research	$1,081,179	$1,000,000	($2,045,838)	-	$ 35,341
Health outcome, services and public policy research	1,731,675	1,125,000	(2,279,537)	-	577,138
	$2,812,854	$2,125,000	($4,325,375)	-	$ 612,479

7. INCOME TAX STATUS

According to Bill 22, which was given Royal Assent effective January 1, 2000, the Foundation and its property are exempt from taxation imposed by or under the authority of an enactment of the Province of Nova Scotia. The Foundation is a registered charitable organization under the Income Tax Act and is therefore exempt from income taxes.

8. STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW

A statement of cash flow was not prepared, as it would not provide any additional meaningful information to the users of these financial statements.

9. PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT

During the current year two errors were discovered related to prior periods. The prior period financial statements have been restated to reflect the error corrections.

During 2002 the Foundation accrued a $500,000 payable for the Regional Partnership Program; however, the grants actually approved and payable for 2002 amounted to only $122,738. Grants payable, included in restricted accounts payable and accrued liabilities, and the corresponding issued grants for 2002 have been reduced by $377,262 to reflect the actual approved grants payable balance of $122,738. This adjustment resulted in an increase of $377,262 in the opening net assets restricted for 2003.

During previous years the Foundation has never accrued a receivable for the second support grant of $2,500,000 owing from the province of Nova Scotia at year end and has accounted for the support grants received on a cash basis. Prior year figures have been adjusted to reflect the support grant receivable of $2,500,000 from the province of Nova Scotia at year end. The support grant receivable for 2002 was allocated $375,000 to administration accounts receivable and $2,125,000 to restricted accounts receivable in accordance with the objects of the Foundation. This adjustment resulted in an increase of $375,000 in the opening net assets unrestricted for 2003 and an increase of $2,125,000 in the opening net assets restricted for 2003. For the year ended March 31, 2003, the support grant receivable was $nil.

10. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the presentation adopted for the current year.

Members of the Board

Hugh A. Gillis, Chair

Since 1998, Hugh is the former Academic Vice-President of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, where he was also a member of the university's chemistry department. Hugh received his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame in Indiana and his Postdoctoral Fellow from the University of Leeds in England.

Brenda Montgomery, Vice Chair

Brenda is the past CEO of the Western Regional Health Board in Clementsport. She received her B.Sc. in nursing from Mount Saint Vincent University and her Masters in Health Services Administration from Dalhousie University, where she is an Honorary Professor in the School of Health Services Administration.

Carol Amaratunga

Carol is the Executive Director of the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health at Dalhousie University in Halifax. She is also an Associate Professor of Research in the Faculty of Health Professions at Dalhousie. Carol received her Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics and Extension Education at the University of Guelph and her Ph.D. in Educational Theory specializing in adult education at the University of Toronto.

Colleen Elliott

Colleen is a Registered Nurse who specializes in the field of gerontology. She is currently on staff at the Glenview Lodge Nursing Home in Truro. Colleen is a graduate of St. Joseph's Hospital in Toronto. She has also received her certificate in Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias. Colleen is past president of the Nova Scotia Division of the Canadian Cancer Society.

Joan Fraser

Joan is the former Executive Director of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia and a member of the Health Charities Network of Nova Scotia. She is also a former Judge of the Court of Canadian Citizenship for Nova Scotia. Joan is particularly interested in research related to heart disease and stroke, health promotion, population health and health outcomes.

John Gainer

John is the Clinical Coordinator of the Eating Disorders Program at the Cape Breton Healthcare Complex, a position he has held since 1994. He is also chair of the Research Ethics Committee. John received his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from McGill University in Montreal. He is the author of more than a dozen health research papers.

Thomas Larder

Thomas is the Chair of the Board of Directors of Canadian Dental Services Plans Inc. and President of Endo/Tech in Nova Scotia. He received his DDS from the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University in Halifax and his Certificate in Endodontics from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston. The Nova Scotia Dental Association has previously honored Thomas as Volunteer of the Year.

Brian D. MacDougall

Brian is the Vice President of Operations and Support Services at the IWK Health Centre for Children, Women and Families in Halifax. He received his Masters of Health Services Administration from Dalhousie University. Brian is also a Certified Health Executive and a Certified Management Consultant.

Donna Meagher-Stewart

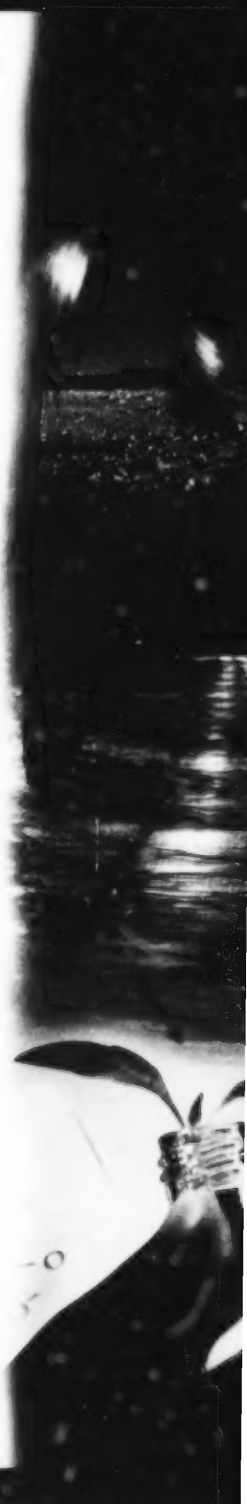
Donna is the Associate Director of the Master of Nursing program at Dalhousie University School of Nursing in Halifax. She has a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto. Donna is an active participant in the health research community and her work has appeared in several journals and books.

Thomas Rathwell

Thomas is a professor and Director of the School of Health Services Administration at Dalhousie University in Halifax. His areas of specialization include health policy and planning, population health, comparative health care systems and public participation. Thomas, who received his Ph.D. from the University of Durham, also served as the Head of the World Health Organization's Collaborating Centre for Health Care Systems Research and Development.

Madine VanderPlaat

Madine is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies at Saint Mary's University. A research methodologist and program evaluator, Madine received her Ph.D. in the Sociology of Education from Dalhousie University. Her research and publication interests focus on collaborative and participatory research strategies, empowerment oriented program evaluation and social interventions designed to promote social inclusion and civil society. Madine is currently working with the human rights and health research unit at the National School for Public Health in Brazil and on the development of a coastal communities network for Women's and Children's Health and HIV/AIDS.



Foundation Staff

Krista Connell

Executive Director

Krista is the Foundation's first Executive Director. Her job is extensive. She is responsible for providing the leadership and professional guidance necessary for the NSHRF to attain its strategic goals. Krista also oversees the tactical operation of the Foundation and ensures its effective and efficient operation.

As the Executive Director, Krista coordinates all aspects of the funding process including grant submissions, grant review, and consultation with key stakeholders. She is also responsible for outreach to the research community in its broadest sense and for the development of policies and approaches that foster involvement and support on the part of stakeholders. Krista reports directly to the Board of Directors.

In addition to her duties as Executive Director, Krista serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Research Transfer Network, and is a member of the CIHR-sponsored working group on the development of a National Strategy for Cognitive Impairment. She is also an accomplished speaker who has been invited to present at national conferences as well as provincial and local venues.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Krista was employed with the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia. As the Manager, Special Services Unit, Krista developed and put in place new programs for injured workers as identified in Court of Appeal decisions. Krista was also named the WCB's first Manager, Health Care Benefits. She also served as the Coordinator for the Provincial Task Force on Primary Health Care and completed a post graduate fellowship with the Nova Scotia Department of Health. She previously practiced Physiotherapy in New Brunswick and Alberta.

Krista was born in Miramichi, New Brunswick. She is a graduate of Dalhousie University's School of Physiotherapy where she currently serves as a sessional lecturer and mentor. In 1990, Krista received her Masters of Health Services Administration from the University of Alberta.

Lesley Poirier

Research Program Analyst

Lesley is the Research Program Analyst for the NSHRF. She is responsible for program development including the research grants and peer-review process, program evaluation and budgeting as well as capacity-development programming including workshops that assist the research community in achieving research objectives that will ultimately benefit the health of Nova Scotians.

Prior to joining the NSHRF, Lesley was the Research Coordinator at the Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health where she designed and implemented multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral research programs. Lesley graduated from Dalhousie University with a Masters of Arts degree in Sociology.

Colleen Clattenburg

Administrative Assistant

Colleen is the Foundation's Administrative Assistant. In this capacity, she provides support to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. Colleen joined the Foundation shortly after it was established and provided administrative support to the Interim Merit Review Committee. She was also instrumental in the development of application information for the very first call for funding.

Colleen began her career at Dalhousie University, where she was employed for seven years. In 1982, she joined the Policy Planning and Research Division of the Department of Social Services. Prior to joining the Foundation, Colleen held administrative support positions in the Research Development and Continuing Education Department and the Nursing Research Department at the QEII Health Services Centre.

Types of Research Funded

The Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation provides support to individuals and organizations conducting health research in four key areas:

Medical Research, which includes basic scientific and biomedical research as well as clinical and epidemiological investigations.

Health-Outcome Research, which involves research into changes in the health status of populations due to the implementation of health programs.

Health-Services Research, which delves into the efficiency and effectiveness of the management, organization, and delivery of health services.

Health Public-Policy Research, which assesses the impact of social factors, allocation of resources, legal and ethical issues, and the administration, organization, and financing of health care.

About NSHRF

The Health Research Foundation Act (Bill 22) was given Royal Assent on December 3, 1998. Little more than a year later, on January 1, 2000, the Act was proclaimed. By September, the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation Office was staffed and fully operational.

The Foundation is the first health research organization in Nova Scotia funded by the provincial government.

The goal of the Foundation is to assist, collaborate with, and fund individuals and organizations conducting health research in the province. Health research is defined in the broadest possible sense.

The establishment of a health research foundation was recommended by the Health Research Task Force in 1996. In the Task Force's 40-page report to government, it noted that health research in Nova Scotia "is severely disadvantaged at present. The lack of provincial funding limits Nova Scotia's capacity to compete nationally and to build a strong support system for decision-making. Although significant pockets of research excellence exist, there is no coordinated mechanism to support health research."

In its first three years NSHRF has awarded over $13 million to Nova Scotian investigators and students.

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Making Inroads

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